

Amendments to the Claims:

The following listing of claims will replace all prior versions, and listings, of claims in the application:

1. (Currently Amended) A device for purifying the exhaust gas of an internal combustion engine comprising:

a particulate filter arranged in the exhaust system, wherein said particulate filter is a wall-flow particulate filter comprising a partition wall having pores, said partition wall carrying a catalyst for absorbing and reducing NO_x on the exhaust gas upstream side surface and the pore surface thereof, said catalyst absorbing NO_x when the air-fuel ratio in the surrounding atmosphere thereof is lean and releasing the absorbed NO_x when said air-fuel ratio is stoichiometric or rich;

FI a catalytic apparatus for purifying NO_x arranged in the exhaust system upstream of said particulate filter, which catalytic apparatus carries a catalyst absorbing NO_x when the air-fuel ratio in the surrounding atmosphere thereof is lean and releasing the absorbed NO_x when said air-fuel ratio is stoichiometric or rich; and

control means for making the air-fuel ratio in said catalytic apparatus rich to release NO_x from said catalyst of said catalytic apparatus to purify the released NO_x by reduction, and making the air-fuel ratio in the particulate filter rich to release NO_x therefrom and to purify the released NO_x by reduction, and release active-oxygen from said catalyst of said particulate filter to oxidize the particulates trapped on said particulate filter by the released active-oxygen.

2. (Previously Amended) A device for purifying the exhaust gas of an internal combustion engine comprising:

a particulate filter arranged in the exhaust system, which carries a catalyst for absorbing and reducing NO_x, said catalyst absorbing NO_x when the air-fuel ratio in the

surrounding atmosphere thereof is lean and releasing the absorbed NO_x when said air-fuel ratio is stoichiometric or rich;

a catalytic apparatus for purifying NO_x arranged in the exhaust system upstream of said particulate filter, which catalytic apparatus carries a catalyst absorbing NO_x when the air-fuel ratio in the surrounding atmosphere thereof is lean and releasing the absorbed NO_x when said air-fuel ratio is stoichiometric or rich; and

bypassing means to make possible the exhaust gas bypass said particulate filter downstream said catalytic apparatus.

3. (Previously Amended) A device for purifying the exhaust gas of an internal combustion engine according to claim 2, wherein during the recovery process of the SO_x pollution of said catalytic apparatus, said bypassing means makes the exhaust gas bypass said particulate filter.

4. (Previously Amended) A device for purifying the exhaust gas of an internal combustion engine according to claim 2, wherein immediately after the finishing of the recovery process of the SO_x pollution of said catalytic apparatus, said bypassing means does not make the exhaust gas bypass said particulate filter and thus the exhaust gas passes through said particulate filter.

5. (Currently Amended) A device for purifying the exhaust gas of an internal combustion engine comprising:

a particulate filter arranged in the exhaust system, wherein said particulate filter is a wall-flow particulate filter comprising a partition wall having pores, said partition wall carrying an oxidation catalyst on the exhaust gas upstream side surface ~~and the pore-surface thereof~~;

a catalytic apparatus for purifying NO_x arranged in the exhaust system upstream of said particulate filter, which catalytic apparatus carries a catalyst absorbing NO_x

when the air-fuel ratio in the surrounding atmosphere thereof is lean and releasing the absorbed NO_x when said air-fuel ratio is stoichiometric or rich; and

control means for making the air-fuel ratio in said catalytic apparatus rich to release NO_x from said catalyst of said catalytic apparatus to purify the released NO_x by reduction, and making the air-fuel ratio in the particulate filter rich to cancel release NO_x therefrom and to purify the released NO_x by reduction, and to oxidize particulates trapped on oxygen contamination on said oxidation catalyst of said particulate filter.

6. (Currently Amended) A device for purifying the exhaust gas of an internal combustion engine, comprising: according to claim 5, wherein said particulate filter carries an oxygen absorbing agent

_____ a particulate filter arranged in the exhaust system, wherein said particulate filter is a wall-flow particulate filter comprising a partition wall having pores, said partition wall carrying an oxygen absorbing agent on the exhaust gas upstream side surface thereof;

_____ a catalytic apparatus for purifying NO_x arranged in the exhaust system upstream of said particulate filter, which catalytic apparatus carries a catalyst absorbing NO_x when the air-fuel ratio in the surrounding atmosphere thereof is lean and releasing the absorbed NO_x when said air-fuel ratio is stoichiometric or rich; and

_____ control means for making the air-fuel ratio in said catalytic apparatus rich to release NO_x from said catalyst of said catalytic apparatus to purify the released NO_x by reduction, and making the air-fuel ratio in the particulate filter rich to release active-oxygen from said agent of said particulate filter to oxidize the particulates trapped on said particulate filter by the released active-oxygen.